UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE
Associazione Costruttori Italiani Macchine Utensili, Robot e Automazione
Italian Machine Tools, Robots and Automation Manufacturers' Association

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UCIMU: IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2025 MACHINE TOOL ORDERS WENT UP (+8.5%)
FOREIGN ORDERS (-18.2%); DOMESTIC ORDERS (+71.5%)

In the first quarter of 2025, the index of machine tool orders, processed by the Studies Dept. & Business Culture Centre of UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE, highlighted an **8.5% increase compared to the period October-December 2024**. The absolute value of the index was 84.5 (base year 2021=100).

The outcome was exclusively due to the recovery of the manufacturers' activity in the domestic market; on the other hand, the performance was negative in the foreign market.

In particular, the orders collected in the domestic market marked a 71.5% rise versus the first quarter of 2024, for an absolute value of 94.5.

On the contrary, **overseas order intake was down by 18.2%** compared to the same period last year. The absolute value of the index stood at 74.4.

Riccardo Rosa, president of UCIMU-SISTEMI PER PRODURRE, said: "The year 2025 has opened with an increase in order intake. This is good news, which proves that, after a very difficult 2024, the short-to-medium term prospects can be better compared to the recent past. That said – continued **President Rosa** – the context in which we are working is causing many concerns, especially on the foreign front".

"For the third consecutive quarter, the order collection in Italy showed a "plus sign" - added **Riccardo Rosa** - and, for this latest survey, the upturn was really significant, to the extent of bringing the index closer to the average level of 2021, which was a very positive year".

"The clarifications regarding the application of the long-awaited measure of Transition 5.0 clearly had positive effects: once enterprises understood the related technicalities and cleared up grey areas, they followed up on their purchase intentions, which materialised in new and actual orders. This happened because, in Italy, the demand for new production systems is still sufficiently dynamic and responds to the objective of upgrading industrial plants, both in a digital and green way. This trend is also confirmed by the feedback of the companies that will exhibit at LAMIERA, scheduled to take place at fieramilano Rho from 6 May, whose exhibition spaces are completely sold-out".

"Certainly, the fact that to date only 11% of the resources made available for this measure have been used (i.e. just a little more than 600 million euro compared to 6.3 billion euro allocated) proves that the measure as structured has not been congenial to enterprises. Indeed, we know from direct experience," - continued **Riccardo Rosa** "that when a measure is user-friendly, the market easily adopts it; this was the case with the policy 4.0".

"In this regard, – pointed out **the president of UCIMU** – it is essential that the Government authorities provide clarity on Industry 4.0. Since January we have been waiting to receive the instructions for companies to book the 4.0 tax credit. If we could have visibility on the actual availability of funds compared to the allocated ceiling of 2.2 billion euro, domestic demand could further accelerate in the next quarter, thus expressing its full potential. Unfortunately, however, the effect could wear off soon afterwards, as companies will not have the time to produce. Therefore, it would be useful to immediately study a measure, verifying its feasibility in Europe. This provision should enable to recover unspent resources and reallocate them for incentive measures, according to the 4.0 and 5.0 models, which should be made available in the next three-year period 2026-2028".

"However, Italian enterprises have received different indications from abroad in this first part of 2025. The worldwide geopolitical crisis, the two open conflicts close to us, the economic and political weakness of Europe, the automotive crisis, and, most of all, the disruptive return of Trump, are deeply troubling the international scenario. The US president's continuous changes of position concerning a possible tariff policy, differentiated by country and type of goods, have raised the rate of uncertainty to levels not seen in recent history. This requires all players in the economic system to take action in order to face this new condition".

"On our part - added President **Rosa** – as entrepreneurs we must go on working to differentiate our markets. The United States is the first area of destination for the Made in Italy from the sector, followed by Germany, China, France and Turkey. We must strive to carefully monitor the areas that may be interesting for us in the coming years, starting with India, Mexico and South America, taking advantage of and also actively participating in the activities implemented by representative organisations to support enterprises. With regard to UCIMU, we have initiatives conceived to foster the entry of associate member companies in areas with high business potential. It is the case of Oficina Italiana de Promoción México, Desk India with a support office in Mumbai and Desk China in Beijing, as well as the ITC and IMT Networks in India and Vietnam, created to facilitate the approach of the Networks companies to these markets, in addition to future exploratory missions in the Balkan area".

"Nevertheless, we ask the Government authorities for full support not only for the development of an appropriate industrial policy to foster the competitiveness improvement of the Italian manufacturing industry, which is even more important in a context such as the current one. We ask our representatives in Europe to be the spokespeople for our need to rely on a strong Union, determined to open a serious dialogue with the US Administration for the benefit of world trade and the security of all peoples".

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